



St. John's Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



The 19th Sunday after Pentecost

October 4, 2026

10:30 Holy Communion

Two Sundays ago we began reading the book of Ezra. Since then we've learned about the Jewish people's opportunity to return home to Jerusalem after being taken to Babylon in exile. Some of them went. They restored their religious practices in Jerusalem and began rebuilding the temple. But today we'll learn that progress on the temple has stalled. Why? How do they overcome it? Will they quit when the going gets tough or will they find some way to persevere?

Welcome to worship today!

If you are visiting with us we invite you to sign the Guest Book in the back of the sanctuary.

Large print bulletins are available on the usher's stand.

The Zoom feed for this service is available in the nursery.

✠ GATHERING ✠

Prelude and Announcements

Gathering Hymn What Is This Place
(For music see Hymn 524 in the Red Hymnal)

1. **What is this place where we are meeting?**
Only a house, the earth its floor.
Walls and a roof sheltering people,
windows for light, an open door.
Yet it becomes a body that lives
when we are gathered here,
and know our God is near.
2. **Words from afar, stars that are falling,**
sparks that are sown in us like seed:
names for our God, dreams, signs and wonders
sent from the past are all we need.
We in this place remember and speak
again what we have heard:
God's free redeeming word.
3. **And we accept bread at this table,**
broken and shared, a living sign.
Here in this world, dying and living,
we are each other's bread and wine.
This is the place where we can receive
what we need to increase:
our justice and God's peace.

Text: Huub Oosterhuis, b. 1933; tr. David Smith, b. 1933. Music: A Vaerius, *Nederlandsch Gedenckclanck*, 1626; arr. Adraïsn Engels, b. 1906. Text and arrangement copyright 1984 TEAM Publications, admin. OCP Publications

Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the Holy Trinity, one God,
who pours love into our hearts
and healing upon the earth.

C: Amen.

P: Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith, let us confess
our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Merciful God,

**C: we confess that we struggle to embody your goodness
in the world and in our own hearts.
Creation groans from overuse.
Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships.
Indifference keeps us from seeking justice.
Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love to others.
Turn our hearts back to you.
Restore our world and reconcile us to one another.
Renew us to live as your holy people,
following the way of Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

**P: Hear this good news:
We have peace with God through Jesus Christ,
in whom there is no condemnation,
but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life.
Receive freely this healing gift of grace.
C: Amen.**

*Hymn of Praise Give Thanks
(For music turn to Hymn 12 in the Songbook binder)*

Verse

**Give thanks with a grateful heart,
Give thanks to the Holy One,
Give thanks because he's given Jesus Christ, His Son.
Give thanks with a grateful heart,
Give thanks to the Holy One,
Give thanks because he's given Jesus Christ, His Son.**

Chorus

**And now let the weak say, "I am strong,"
Let the poor say, "I am rich,
Because of what the Lord has done for us."
And now let the weak say, "I am strong,"
Let the poor say, "I am rich,
Because of what the Lord has done for us."**

Repeat Verse and Chorus

Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray...

Beloved God, from you come all things that are good. Lead us by the inspiration of your Spirit to know those things that are right, and by your merciful guidance, help us to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

✠ WORD ✠

First Reading Ezra 4:1-5, 24

B: When the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the returned exiles were building a temple to the Lord, the God of Israel, ²they approached Zerubbabel and the heads of families and said to them, ‘Let us build with you, for we worship your God as you do, and we have been sacrificing to him ever since the days of King Esar-haddon of Assyria who brought us here.’ ³But Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and the rest of the heads of families in Israel said to them, ‘You shall have no part with us in building a house to our God; but we alone will build to the Lord, the God of Israel, as King Cyrus of Persia has commanded us.’

Then the people of the land discouraged the people of Judah, and made them afraid to build, ⁵and they bribed officials to frustrate their plan throughout the reign of King Cyrus of Persia and until the reign of King Darius of Persia. ²⁴At that time the work on the house of God in Jerusalem stopped and was discontinued until the second year of the reign of King Darius of Persia.

After the reading the reader may say: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

Second Reading Ezra 5

D: Now the prophets, Haggai and Zechariah son of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel who was over them. ²Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Jeshua son of Jozadak set out to rebuild the house of God in Jerusalem; and with them were the prophets of God, helping them.

At the same time Tattenai the governor of the province Beyond the River and Shethar-bozenai and their associates came to them and spoke to them thus, ‘Who gave you a decree to build this house and to finish this structure?’ ⁴They also asked them this: ‘What are the names of the men who are building this building?’ ⁵But the eye of their God was upon

the elders of the Jews, and they did not stop them until a report reached Darius and then answer was returned by letter in reply to it.

The copy of the letter that Tattenai the governor of the province Beyond the River and Shethar-bozenai and his associates the envoys who were in the province Beyond the River sent to King Darius; ⁷they sent him a report, in which was written as follows: ‘To Darius the king, all peace! ⁸May it be known to the king that we went to the province of Judah, to the house of the great God. It is being built of hewn stone, and timber is laid in the walls; this work is being done diligently and prospers in their hands. ⁹Then we spoke to those elders and asked them, “Who gave you a decree to build this house and to finish this structure?” ¹⁰We also asked them their names, for your information, so that we might write down the names of the men at their head. ¹¹This was their reply to us: “We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and we are rebuilding the house that was built many years ago, which a great king of Israel built and finished. ¹²But because our ancestors had angered the God of heaven, he gave them into the hand of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, the Chaldean, who destroyed this house and carried away the people to Babylonia. ¹³However, King Cyrus of Babylon, in the first year of his reign, made a decree that this house of God should be rebuilt.

¹⁴Moreover, the gold and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple in Jerusalem and had brought into the temple of Babylon, these King Cyrus took out of the temple of Babylon, and they were delivered to a man named Sheshbazzar, whom he had made governor. ¹⁵He said to him, ‘Take these vessels; go and put them in the temple in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be rebuilt on its site.’ ¹⁶Then this Sheshbazzar came and laid the foundations of the house of God in Jerusalem; and from that time until now it has been under construction, and it is not yet finished.” ¹⁷And now, if it seems good to the king, have a search made in the royal archives there in Babylon, to see whether a decree was issued by King Cyrus for the rebuilding of this house of God in Jerusalem. Let the king send us his pleasure in this matter.’

After the reading the reader may say: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

Third Reading Ezra 6:1-10, 13-15

E: Then King Darius made a decree, and they searched the archives where the documents were stored in Babylon. ²But it was in Ecbatana, the capital in the province of Media, that a scroll was found on which this was written: ‘A record. ³In the first year of his reign, King Cyrus issued a decree: Concerning the house of God at Jerusalem, let the house

be rebuilt, the place where sacrifices are offered and burnt-offerings are brought; its height shall be sixty cubits and its width sixty cubits, ⁴with three courses of hewn stones and one course of timber; let the cost be paid from the royal treasury. ⁵Moreover, let the gold and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took out of the temple in Jerusalem and brought to Babylon, be restored and brought back to the temple in Jerusalem, each to its place; you shall put them in the house of God.'

'Now you, Tattenai, governor of the province Beyond the River, Shethar-bozenai, and you, their associates, the envoys in the province Beyond the River, keep away; ⁷let the work on this house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews rebuild this house of God on its site. ⁸Moreover, I make a decree regarding what you shall do for these elders of the Jews for the rebuilding of this house of God: the cost is to be paid to these people, in full and without delay, from the royal revenue, the tribute of the province Beyond the River. ⁹Whatever is needed—young bulls, rams, or sheep for burnt-offerings to the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, or oil, as the priests in Jerusalem require—let that be given to them day by day without fail, ¹⁰so that they may offer pleasing sacrifices to the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king and his children.

Then, according to the word sent by King Darius, Tattenai, the governor of the province Beyond the River, Shethar-bozenai, and their associates did with all diligence what King Darius had ordered. ¹⁴So the elders of the Jews built and prospered, through the prophesying of the prophet Haggai and Zechariah son of Iddo. They finished their building by command of the God of Israel and by decree of Cyrus, Darius, and King Artaxerxes of Persia; ¹⁵and this house was finished on the third day of the month of Adar, in the sixth year of the reign of King Darius.

After the reading the reader may say: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

Children's Sermon

Sermon

Hymn of the Day The Church's One Foundation
(For music see Hymn 654 in the Red Hymnal)

**1. The church's one foundation
is Jesus Christ her Lord;
she is his new creation**

**by water and the word.
From heav'n he came and sought her
to be his holy bride;
with his own blood he bought her,
and for her life he died.**

- 2. Elect from every nation,
yet one o'er all the earth,
her charter of salvation
one Lord, one faith, one birth:
one holy name she blesses,
partakes one holy food,
and to one hope she presses
with ev'ry grace endued.**
- 3. Though with a scornful wonder
this world sees her oppressed,
by schisms rent asunder,
by heresies distressed,
yet saints their watch are keeping;
their cry goes up, "How long?"
and soon the night of weeping
shall be the morn of song.**
- 4. Through toil and tribulation
and tumult of her war,
she waits the consummation
of peace forevermore;
till with the vision glorious
her longing eyes are blest,
and the great church victorious
shall be the church at rest.**
- 5. Yet she on earth as union
with God, the Three in One,
and mystic sweet communion
with those whose rest is won.
Oh, blessed heav'nly chorus!
Lord, save us by your grace,
that we, like saints before us,
may see you face to face.**

Apostles' Creed

P: We confirm our faith with the Apostles' Creed.

**C: I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Peace

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

P: We share that peace with one another.

The congregation may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.

Offertory and Gathering of Prayers and Offerings

Simple Gifts from God by J. Paul Williams and Joseph M. Martin

During the offertory you are invited to write a prayer concern on the small blank slip of paper in your worship bulletin. This slip will be collected by the ushers in the offering plates. The concerns raised will be prayed for later in the service.

✠ MEAL ✠

Hymn of Thanksgiving Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful Lord

For music turn to page 35 in the Blue Hymnal

Let the vineyards be fruitful, Lord,

and fill to the brim our cup of blessing.
Gather a harvest from the seeds that were sown,
that we may be fed with the bread of life.
Gather the hopes and dreams of all;
unite them with the prayers we offer now.
Grace our table with your presence, Lord,
and give us a foretaste of the feast to come.

Offering Prayer

P: Let us pray: God of creation:

**C: you send rain and the earth springs forth abundantly.
All blessings are from you;
make us generous with what we have.
Use our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts
in service to you and in love to our neighbors,
today and always.
Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

P: With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

Issues raised by the congregation are lifted in prayer.

The prayer concludes:

P: Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

C: Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P: It is indeed right, our duty, and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus of Nazareth; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with church of yesterday, today and tomorrow; and the church here in this place and all churches throughout the world, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

(Isaiah 6:3, spoken)

**C: Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

P: In the night in which he was handed over our Lord Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples saying, “Take and eat. This is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.” Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.”

Lord's Prayer

P: Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**C: Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

Invitation to Communion

P: Christ invites you to this table.

All who are thirsty, all who are hungry, come!

Communion Distribution

Welcome to the Lord's Supper! All who are baptized are invited to receive communion. We use wheat bread and wine for communion. If you would prefer a gluten free wafer instead of bread please tell the communion assistant. Also, if you prefer grape juice to wine, it is available pre-filled in the individual glasses. As we commune together everyone is invited to sing the following hymns:

Lamb of God (Page 39 of the Blue Hymnal)

445 Wash, O God, Our Sons and Daughters (Red Hymnal)

441 *Oh, Happy Day When We Shall Stand (Red Hymnal)*

Communion Blessing After all have communed the pastor will say:

P: The body and the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: Amen.

Post Communion Prayer

A: Let us pray:

Sustaining God, with this bread and cup, you nourish us with mercy and abundant life. By your Spirit, send us from this table to serve a needy world. Make us living signs of your liberation, healing, and love, following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray.

C: Amen.

✠ SENDING ✠

Blessing

P: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

C: Amen.

Sending Hymn Give to Our God Immortal Praise

(For music see Hymn 848 in the Red Hymnal)

1. Give to our God immortal praise!

Mercy and truth are all his ways.

Wonders of grace to God belong;

repeat his mercies in your song.

2. He sent his Son with pow'r to save

from guilt and darkness and the grave.

Wonders of grace to God belong;

repeat his mercies in your song.

3. Give to the Lord of lords renown;

the King of kings with glory crown.

His mercies ever shall endure

when lords and kings are known no more!

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: God's Work. Our Hands.

Worship assistants TODAY:

Greeters and Ushers	Janice Lockwood
Acolyte	Charlotte Stroup
Altar Care	Mary Zuege
Communion Assistants	Greg Zuege
Counters	Bill and Katy Stimmel
Coffee Hour	

Worship assistants for next Sunday, October 10

Greeters and Ushers	Bruce and Connie Stevenson
Acolyte	Elijah Young
Counters	Bruce and Connie Stevenson
Coffee Hour	Pumpkin Yummies

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St. John's Lutheran Church

888 County Road 9, Victor, NY 14564

stjohnsvictor.com (585) 924-5192

The Rev. Jonathan Deibler, Pastor

Dongwon Shin, Pianist